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SUBJECT: BANGLADESH: WORKERS RIGHTS IN EPZ'S

REF: STATE 172549

[1](#)1. (SBU) On September 25, CDA presented demarche (reftel) to Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Reaz Rahman, who expressed appreciation for USG concerns on workers rights but reiterated BDG concerns that unfettered trade unionism could politicize and undermine the most efficient industrial sector in Bangladesh--the EPZ's. Rahman told CDA: "Just look at the Chittagong port or any bank or state operated enterprise. Unions have taken them over."

[1](#)2. (SBU) Comment: We will repeat the demarche with other BDG officials. Rahman is exceptionally unsympathetic because he blames militant unionism for virtually destroying his family's newspaper. The good news, however, is that the BDG understands that we continue to monitor closely labor conditions in the EPZ's.
CHAMMAS